

Office of the Secretary, Commerce

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response would involve more than the production of documents.

(m) *United States* means the Federal Government, its departments and agencies, and individuals acting on behalf of the Federal Government.

§ 15.13 Demand for testimony or production of documents: Department policy.

No employee shall in response to a demand, produce any documents, or provide testimony regarding any information relating to, or based upon Department of Commerce documents, or disclose any information or produce materials acquired as part of the performance of that employee's official duties, or because of that employee's official status without the prior authorization of the General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or the appropriate agency counsel. The reasons for this policy are as follows:

(a) To conserve the time of Department employees for conducting official business;

(b) To minimize the possibility of involving the Department in controversial issues that are not related to the Department's mission;

(c) To prevent the possibility that the public will misconstrue variances between personal opinions of Department employees and Department policy;

(d) To avoid spending the time and money of the United States for private purposes;

(e) To preserve the integrity of the administrative process; and

(f) To protect confidential, sensitive information and the deliberative process of the Department.

§ 15.14 Demand for testimony or production of documents: Department procedures.

(a) Whenever a demand for testimony or for the production of documents is made upon an employee, the employee shall immediately notify the General Counsel (Room 5890, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230, (202) 482-1067) or appropriate agency counsel. When a demand for testimony or for the production of documents is made upon an employee of the Patent and Trademark Office, the employee

should immediately notify the Solicitor, by phone, (703) 305-9035; by mailed addressed Solicitor, Box 8, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231; or in person to 2121 Crystal Drive, Crystal Park 2, Suite 918, Arlington, Virginia 22215.

(b) A Department employee may not give testimony, produce documents, or answer inquiries from a person not employed by the Department regarding testimony or documents subject to a demand or a potential demand under the provisions of this subpart without the approval of the General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or the appropriate agency counsel. A Department employee shall immediately refer all inquiries and Demands to the General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or appropriate agency counsel. Where appropriate, the General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or appropriate agency counsel, may instruct the Department employee, orally or in writing, not to give testimony or produce documents.

(c)(1) *Demand for testimony or documents.* A demand for the testimony of a Department employee shall be addressed to the General Counsel, Room 5890, Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230 or appropriate agency counsel. A demand for testimony of an employee of the Patent and Trademark Office shall be mail addressed to the Solicitor, Box 8, Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231; or in person to 2121 Crystal Drive, Crystal Park 2, Suite 918, Arlington, Virginia 22215.

(2) *Subpoenas.* A subpoena for testimony by a Department employee or a document shall be served in accordance with the Federal Rules of Civil or Criminal Procedure or applicable state procedure and a copy of the subpoena shall be sent to the General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or appropriate agency counsel.

(3) *Affidavit.* Except when the United States is a party, every demand shall be accompanied by an affidavit or declaration under 28 U.S.C. 1746 or, if an affidavit is not feasible, a statement setting forth the title of the legal proceeding, the forum, the requesting party's interest in the legal proceeding, the reason for the demand, a showing that the desired testimony or document is not reasonably available from

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any other source, and if testimony is requested, the intended use of the testimony, a general summary of the desired testimony, and a showing that no document could be provided and used in lieu of testimony. The purpose of this requirement is to assist the General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or appropriate agency counsel in making an informed decision regarding whether testimony or the production of a document(s) should be authorized.

(d) A certified copy of a document for use in a legal proceeding may be provided upon written request and payment of applicable fees. Written requests for certification shall be addressed to the agency counsel for the component having possession, custody, or control of the document. Unless governed by another applicable provision of law or component regulation, the applicable fee includes charges for certification and reproduction as set out in 15 CFR part 4.9. Other reproduction costs and postage fees, as appropriate, must also be borne by the requester.

(e) The Secretary retains the authority to authorize and direct testimony in those cases where a statute or Presidential order mandates a personal decision by the Secretary.

(f) The General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or appropriate agency counsel may consult or negotiate with an attorney for a party or the party if not represented by an attorney, to refine or limit a demand so that compliance is less burdensome or obtain information necessary to make the determination required by paragraph (b) of this section. Failure of the attorney to cooperate in good faith to enable the General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or the Secretary, or the appropriate agency counsel to make an informed determination under this subpart may serve, where appropriate, as a basis for a determination not to comply with the demand.

(g) A determination under this subpart to comply or not to comply with a demand is not an assertion or waiver of privilege, lack of relevance, technical deficiency or any other ground for non-compliance.

(h) The General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or appropriate agency counsel may waive any requirements set forth

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under this section when circumstances warrant.

§ 15.15 Procedures when a Department employee receives a subpoena.

(a) A Department employee who receives a subpoena shall immediately forward the subpoena to the General Counsel, or the appropriate agency counsel. In the case of an employee of the Patent and Trademark Office, the subpoena shall immediately be forwarded to the Solicitor. The General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or appropriate agency counsel will determine the extent to which a Department employee will comply with the subpoena.

(b) If an employee is served with a subpoena that the General Counsel, or the Solicitor, or appropriate agency counsel determines should not be complied with, the General Counsel, Solicitor or appropriate agency counsel will attempt to have the subpoena withdrawn or modified. If this cannot be done, the General Counsel, Solicitor or appropriate agency counsel will attempt to obtain Department of Justice representation for the employee and move to have the subpoena modified or quashed. If, because of time constraints, this is not possible prior to the compliance date specified in the subpoena, the employee should appear at the time and place set forth in the subpoena. If legal counsel cannot appear on behalf of the employee, the employee should produce a copy of the Department's regulations and inform the legal tribunal that he/she has been advised by counsel not to provide the requested testimony and/or produce documents. If the legal tribunal rules that the demand in the subpoena must be complied with, the employee shall respectfully decline to comply with the demand. *United States ex rel. Touhy v. Ragen*, 340 U. S. 462 (1951).

(c) Where the Department employee is an employee of the Office of the Inspector General, the Inspector General in consultation with the General Counsel, will make a determination under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section.